

NUISANCE NOTES

Spring, 2002

Western Regional Panel Update, No. 13



ANNUAL MEETING AND SCREENING PROCESS WORKSHOP HELD IN LAS VEGAS

The Western Regional Panel sponsored an Invasive Species Screening Workshop in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 8-9 to create a forum for frank, open discussion about invasive species screening as a management tool. National leaders from commerce, universities, environmental conservation, and state and federal governments came together in search of common ground. A full day of presentations covered concerns, opportunities, and management options associated with the importation and intentional release of non-native aquatic plants and animals. The second half-day was a facilitated work session oriented toward finding solutions. The Workshop was organized by Scott Smith, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and facilitated by Michael Fraidenburg of Dynamic Solutions Group.

The Annual Meeting followed the Screening Workshop. The Panel heard presentations about The Nature Conservancy's new 5-year initiative on invasive species; the Headwaters vs. Talent Decision (which has changed the way aquatic pesticide applications are regulated in nine western states); Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration and the movement of aquatic nuisance species (ANS); the spread of New Zealand mud snails in the west; and new legislation for 2002 including re-authorization of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996. Other issues discussed included the funding of two State ANS Management Plan Workshops, the Draft Rapid Response Plan, and increased coordination among the Regional Panels.

At the end of the meeting, President Scott Smith guided the members in a visioning process for their own ANS work and coordinating it with others. For information, contact Scott Smith (360-902-2724), smithsss@dfw.wa.gov.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN TEAM 100TH MERIDIAN INITIATIVE MEETING

The Colorado River Basin Team of the 100th Meridian Initiative met in Las Vegas, Nevada on February 13, 2002. Issues at this meeting: fishing tournaments and education to boaters; a study of the possible economic impacts to Colorado River Basin states of zebra mussel invasion; the use of portable boat wash stations and development of a rapid response plan. The team received New Zealand mud snail watch cards. Five hundred boat ramp signs will be produced by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and paid for through the Initiative for use by federal, state and local agencies at boat launch sites and marinas. For information, contact Bob Pitman, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), (505-248-6471), bob_pitman@fws.gov.

100TH MERIDIAN INITIATIVE ANNUAL MEETING CONVENED IN NEBRASKA AT AKSARBEN AQUARIUM

The 100th Meridian Initiative members discussed the growth of the recreational boater database, Asian carp in the Missouri River, the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, zebra mussels and barges, fishing tournaments and the new Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers campaign created by the ANS Task Force. The database and other information about the Initiative can be found at www.100thmeridian.org. Visit the web site to sign up for the listserve. For information, contact Tina Proctor (303-236-7862, ext. 260), bettinga_proctor@fws.gov.

STATE UPDATE

ALASKA The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is writing the Alaska ANS plan. The first draft will be available by mid-June and the final plan is expected to be completed by early fall. ADF&G is administering a contract with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to research various marine invasive species problems on the West Coast. The USFWS and ADF&G are cooperating to produce Atlantic salmon and green crab invasive species cards to distribute to the public. Public ANS education continues. The serious problem of Atlantic salmon escapees has received considerable attention and effort from state and federal staff. WRP Contact Bob Piorkowski (907-465-6109), Bob_Piorkowski@fishgame.state.ak.us

ARIZONA New Zealand mud snails were detected at Lee's Ferry, a popular fishing and intense research site on the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam and subsequently throughout the Grand Canyon.

Arizona Game and Fish continues to work with partners on giant Salvinia on the Lower Colorado River. The team is addressing the infestation in the Palo Verde Irrigation drains in CA. The Palo Verde Irrigation District continues to make progress toward eradication. Control efforts on the main stem of the river have limited feasibility until the source can be removed. Salvinia doesn't appear to thrive in the River, however clusters of the plant have been locally detected downstream into Mexico.

A draft of an ANS Management Plan was developed in conjunction with the University of Arizona, and with assistance from the Western Regional Panel, a stakeholder workshop will be held in the fall to increase partnership involvement.

Thanks to assistance from the 100th Meridian Initiative and the State of Utah, ANS signs are being installed at boat ramps along the Colorado River. ANS information is included in the boating education program and in the fishing regulations (stop hitchhikers). Another pathway for education has been local sporting

radio programs. WRP Contact Larry Riley, (602-789-3257), riley@gf.state.az.us

CALIFORNIA The CALFED interagency Nonnative Invasive Species (NIS) Program will be extended for 3 more years and continue to be coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The program will now also include a watershed coordinator who will be working directly with watershed groups to coordinate NIS activities on the ground.

The NIS Program also recently formed an interagency Advisory Council that will work on improving agency responses to NIS issues, especially prevention and rapid response. Initially, this Council will be working with CALFED project proponents to assist with development of a rapid response model for zebra mussels.

The CALFED project selection process recently recommended two NIS projects for funding (*Egeria densa* research and RID NIS Project) and has recommended six others for funding subject to some modifications. These eight projects have requested a total of over \$4.2 million. WRP Contact: Kim Webb (209-946-6400 X311), kwebb@delta.dfg.ca.gov.

MONTANA A working draft of the Montana ANS Management Plan was distributed to federal and state agencies, Canadian provinces and conservation organizations in late May for internal review. A first draft is planned for public review and comment in early July with a final scheduled for mid-September.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is continuing to work with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to install three more Traveler Information Stations on major highways coming into Montana. These low frequency radio stations will have ANS prevention messages aimed at recreational anglers and boaters coming into Montana for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

Montana is continuing to monitor and research the continuous spread of whirling disease, New Zealand mud snails, and other ANS across the state. There is a new section on ANS prevention in the Montana Fishing Regulations and signs at the most popular waters specific to the local ANS threats. Public Service Announcements, Montana Outdoors Magazine articles and other education materials are being developed and will be made available soon. WRP Contact Tim Gallagher (406-444-2448), tgallagher@state.mt.us.

NEW MEXICO The NM Dept. of Game and Fish, working in collaboration with USFWS's, Region 2 ANS Coordinator, Bob Pitman, has been distributing NZ mudsnail watchcards to aquatic biologists in the state. WRP Contact Brian Lang, (505-827-4628), blang@state.nm.us.

NORTH DAKOTA North Dakota Game and Fish Department's ANS prevention campaign will continue to focus on educating outdoor recreationists with articles in newspapers and magazines and with public service radio programs. Field staff use a PC presentation on ANS prevention for sportsmen's club meetings or boat shows. Large signs reminding boaters to clean and disinfect equipment after use before leaving the area are being installed at boat ramps. ANS information in the ND Fishing Guide for 2002-2004 is updated. In addition to education, fishing tournament boats are to be inspected by tournament officials for ANS and proper safeguards done before boats are launched.

North Dakota now only permits licensed bait vendors to import live bait which must be collected from ANS-free areas. Licensed anglers cannot import live bait for use in North Dakota waters. WRP Contact Terry Steinwand North Dakota Game and Fish Department (701-328-6313), tsteinwa@state.nd.us or Lynn Schlueter (701-662-3617), lschluet@state.nd.us.

SOUTH DAKOTA South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SD GFP) has teamed up with the South Dakota Bass Anglers Sportsmen Society (B.A.S.S.) Federation to initiate a program to encourage boaters to wash their boats before launching them into South Dakota waters. Currently, there are 20 participating "boat wash" stations. These facilities all have signs explaining the program and a list of these locations has been published in the 2002 South Dakota Fishing Handbook. Other ANS informational material has been published in the Handbook as well.

All boat ramps on the Missouri River have signs with an aquatic nuisance species (zebra mussel, watermilfoil and loosestrife) message. The signs are a cooperative effort between SD GFP, Army Corps of Engineers, SD B.A.S.S. Federation, and Sport Fish Restoration.

An internal SD GFP policy/protocol for gear and equipment handling regarding ANS species has been prepared and distributed to all staff. WRP Contact Clifton Stone, (605 734-4538), cliff.stone@state.sd.us

UTAH Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is distributing outreach materials in Utah while keeping an eye out for new invasions. State Parks is developing kiosks with a panel describing ANS threats and preventive measures to be installed at all major waters in Utah where they have facilities.

There is a new discovery of the New Zealand mud snails in the Green River. A dead infestation of zebra mussels was discovered on a boat from the Midwest and recently moored in Lake Powell.

ANS signs have been installed at major launching areas throughout Utah. One thousand signs were produced by the 100th Meridian Initiative for installation throughout the Colorado River basin and 56 signs were given to Wyoming for installation in the upper Green River basin.

National Park Service at Glen Canyon National Recreational Area established an interdiction program for zebra mussels where boaters from water infested with zebra mussels are asked to wash their boats at NPS expense prior to launching. Thirty zebra mussel substrates were procured from the Center for Lakes and Reservoirs at Portland State University for placement at most major waters throughout Utah. WRP Contact Randy Radant (801-538-4760), randyradant@utah.gov.

PROVINCIAL UPDATE

ALBERTA Purple loosestrife numbers in Alberta have declined significantly since the initiation of the Alberta Purple Loosestrife Eradication Program in 1994. Alberta has been very successful in the elimination of Purple loosestrife at 105 locations and a reduction of plants in the remaining 89 active locations. In 2001, a total of nine new locations were found. Although new sites are being discovered each year, most of these are small infestations. WRP Contact Rob Burland, (403-382-4015), rob.burland@gov.ab.ca

MANITOBA Monitoring efforts indicate that zebra mussels have not established in Manitoba. Efforts continue toward public information and education regarding zebra mussel prevention in the province. Road signage was cost-shared again this year with the Province of Ontario along the busy east-west corridor. Border inspections of recreational watercraft for ANS, and boater surveys will continue through the boating season of 2002. Manitoba has formed a Committee on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms to review and comment on The National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms. WRP Contact Wendy Ralley, Manitoba Conservation, (204-934-8146), wralley@gov.mb.ca or Dwight Williamson, Manitoba Conservation (204-945-7030), dwilliamso@gov.mb.ca.

SASKATCHEWAN Saskatchewan Environment is focusing its efforts this season on increased ANS awareness and education both departmentally and publicly. The program will include an Invasive Species Handbook for provincial Conservation Officers, information distribution to local resort and cottage associations and outfitting companies, anglers surveys at border crossings, and training of Canada Customs staff at several ports of entry. The goal is to give people the tools necessary to monitor their local environments, and identify major species if and when they occur. WRP Contact Marcy Bast, Saskatchewan Department of Environment and Resource Management (306-787-9938), mbast@serm.gov.sk.ca.

OTHER MEMBERS

PACIFIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION PSMFC sent out a press release and fact sheet regarding the threat of zebra mussels being spread during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration starting in 2003. Tips on prevention are included in the release. Teaming up with the Bonneville Power Administration and Bureau of Reclamation, PSMFC is publicizing the crime witness hotline number which takes reports of zebra mussel sightings. The number is 1-800-437-2744. WRP Contact Stephen Phillips (503 650-5400), stephen_phillips@psmfc.org.

PUGET SOUND WATER QUALITY ACTION TEAM PSAT contracted with Washington Sea Grant to educate Puget Sound's recreational SCUBA diving community

about ANS issues. Sea Grant will develop education and training materials and, in cooperation with diving organizations and the 'Northwest Dive News' magazine, will recruit and train divers to recognize and report new ANS sightings in Puget Sound waters. The Team provided funding support for a new permanent "Alien Invaders" exhibit at the Point Defiance Aquarium featuring nonnative aquatic plants and animals that threaten fresh and marine waters of the Puget Sound ecosystem and the Pacific Northwest. The exhibit was created through a partnership with the Point Defiance Aquarium and the University of Washington, Tacoma branch.

PSAT applied to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Estuary Program to fund development of general plans for monitoring ANS in the Lower Columbia River, Tillamook Bay and Puget Sound National Estuary Programs. The anticipated outcome will provide a regionally coordinated approach for monitoring ANS in the Pacific Northwest. WRP Contact Kevin Anderson (360-407-7324), kanderson@psat.wa.gov.

NORTH AMERICAN LAKE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY Volume 22 Number 1 of Lakeline, the NALMS magazine is devoted entirely to ANS. There is an article by WRP members Mark Sytsma and Stephen Phillips. WRP Contact Tom Conry (254-752-8554), tomc@ci.waco.tx.us

PUBLICATIONS

You Ought to Tell Somebody, a 23-minute video produced by Oregon Sea Grant Communications is a must-see for aquatic monitoring staff and volunteers, field educators, aquaculture operators, and others who spend time in lakes, rivers and estuaries. To order, call 1-800-375-9360 or e-mail: sea.grant.communications@orst.edu.

A brochure, a fact sheet and a display all entitled *Threats to the West, The Invasion of Western Waters by Non-Native Species* are available through the Western Regional Panel, thanks to the efforts of Marcia Brockbank of the San Francisco Estuary Project. To order copies or to use the display, contact Tina Proctor (see phone and e-mail below).

WHAT'S NEXT

WRP Next Annual Meeting - September 11 and 12, 2002 in Salt Lake City, Utah. To register, contact Tina Proctor, (see phone and e-mail below).

Montana and Yellowstone National Park will be host to the **National Invasive Species Council's** first field trip. The 32-member Council will hold business meetings on June 25 & 26, 2002 at Chico Hot Springs followed by a tour/field trip of Yellowstone. Contact Craig McClure, YNP, (307344-2168) for more details. The meeting is open to the public.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO CONTRIBUTE INFORMATION TO "NOTES", CONTACT Tina Proctor, 303-236-7862, ext. 260.) Nuisance Notices is published in the fall and spring. bettina_proctor@fws.gov